Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 51, line 20 with the following amended paragraph:

Protocols for the inhibition of BOG by anti-sense oligonucleotides. Phosphothionate-modified antisense oligonucleotides corresponding to the 5' end (AATCACTGCCTTGGTAGGGGACACCATTAA) (SEQ ID NO:12) and the 3' end of the one reading frame (TCAGTTCATGGAACTCTGTGTTCTGAAAGTGAC) (SEQ ID NO:13) of BOG were synthesized and purified by OPC column (Bioserne Biotechnology, Inc.). Cells were plated at 50% confluency and allowed to attach in Ham-F12 media containing 10% Fetal Bobine Serum (FBS). Once the cells were attached, they were washed once with DPBS and media containing antisense oligonucleotides (340 .mu.g/ml each) and/or TGF-.beta.1 (250 pg/ml) was added to the cells, and the cultures were allowed to grow for 48 hours. Cell growth was assayed using the Cell Titer 96 Non-radioactive Cell Proliferation Assay (CellTiter 96 Non-Radioactive Cell Proliferation Assay (cat# G4000). Promega Corporation).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 54, line 9 with the following amended paragraph:

The coding region of the human cDNA was isolated from a human liver cDNA library (human liver 5' stretch plus cDNA, Clonetech Laboratories, Inc.) using PCR. See Table 4. Primers were designed to the 5' (ATGGTCTCTCCTAGC) (SEQ ID NO:14) and 3' (GAGTTCCATGAAC) (SEQ ID NO: 15) portions of the open reading frame of mouse and rat BOG, and PCR was done using PCR SuperMix (Gibco, BRL Life Technologies) using company recommended conditions. The predicted 500 bp PCR fragment was cloned into the TA vector pCR2.1 (In Vitrogen.TM.), for further analysis (pCR2.1huBOG). Five clones were isolated and double strand sequenced obtained to confirm hBOG sequence.